BRITISH COLUMBIA | BCStats

Infoline

Contact: bcstats.infoline@gov.bc.ca Issue: 12-42 October 19th, 2012

- **Consumer prices climb just 0.7% in the 12 months to September**
- **Number of EI beneficiaries increase 3.4% in August**
- **August wholesale sales up 1.5%**

Prices

- **British Columbia's year-over-year inflation rate was among the lowest in the country in September, edging down to 0.7%.** The cost of energy, which typically fluctuates substantially, was unchanged (-0.0%) from September 2011.

  Lower fuel prices helped moderate an increase to transportation (+0.5%) costs, as drivers paid 0.8% less to fill up their tanks. The cost of purchasing an automobile also fell (-0.3%), but consumers paid more to maintain (+3.1%) and to insure (+5.2%) a vehicle. Despite higher costs for fuel oil (+3.7%), electricity (+5.7%) and water (+6.3%), BC residents paid 0.5% less for shelter than in September of last year. Overall costs for accommodation were up 1.5% for renters, but were 1.6% lower for home owners.

  Consumers in BC faced higher prices for most types of goods in September. Food prices rose 1.4%, reflecting increases in the cost of food purchased from stores (+1.0%) as well as restaurant meals (+2.2%). Students started the school year with a 2.3% increase in tuition costs. Clothing & footwear (+3.1%) prices were also up, but costs for health and personal care (-0.5%) were lower than in the same month in 2011.

  The inflation rate in Vancouver (+0.8%) was a touch higher than the provincial average, while Victoria's (+0.5%) rate was moderately lower. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **Nationally, increases in energy (+2.9%) and food (+1.6%) fuelled the inflation rate in September (+1.2%).** BC and Ontario (each +0.7%) were the only provinces where price increases were lower than the Canadian average. PEI's inflation rate (+2.0%) was the highest in the country. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

The Economy

- **Sales of goods manufactured in British Columbia rose 1.3% (*seasonally adjusted*) in August adding to a 0.6% increase in the previous month.** The boost in the value of sales was largely due to an upturn in non-durable goods (+3.2%), which was driven by substantial growth in the dominant paper industry (+17.5%). Sales of food (+0.9%) and plastics & rubber products (+5.9%) were also up. On the durables side, a 2.9% rise in sales by producers of wood products was offset by decreased sales in the primary metals industry (-11.3%), the second largest manufacturer of durable goods in BC. Manufacturers of non-metallic mineral products (+2.4%) and transportation equipment (+12.8%) also saw their sales rise, but other manufacturers of durable goods, such as machinery (-3.6%) and furniture & related products (-3.7%), did not fare as well. Overall sales of durables were down 0.3%.

  The Canadian manufacturing sector also strengthened in August, with sales climbing 1.5%. Results were mixed among the provinces. Quebec (-0.3%) and Manitoba (-4.7%) exhibited weakness, but every other province posted gains, most notably New Brunswick (+7.8%). *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **Wholesale sales climbed 1.5% (*seasonally adjusted*) in August, ending two months of de-**

Report — No report this issue

Did you know...

Two-thirds (64%) of Canadians feel that they don't hear enough about Canadian history, heritage, or achievements. *Source: Ipsos Canada*

clines. Nationally, the value of wholesale sales edged up 0.5%, as gains in a wide range of sectors were able to offset a retraction in the automotive sector (-0.7%). Higher sales in most provinces outweighed weakness in Saskatchewan (-6.2%) and PEI (-0.2%). Seven provinces saw growth, ranging from 0.1% in Alberta to a solid 1.5% in BC.

Data Source: Statistics Canada

- **The number of Employment Insurance (EI) claimants receiving regular benefits in British Columbia was up (+3.4% *seasonally adjusted*) to 57,690 in August.** At the national level, an estimated 534,420 Canadians received regular EI benefits, 3.2% more than in July. The most substantial increase in the number of claimants was registered in Quebec (+7.0%), while the Northwest Territories (-1.1%) saw the only decrease in the country.

  On a year-over-year basis, the number of EI recipients in BC has declined 5.8% (3,570 fewer people receiving regular benefits) since August 2011. With the exception of New Brunswick, all other provinces also recorded declines over the 12-month period. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

Third Quarter in Review

- **Investment in non-residential building construction in BC grew 2.5% (*seasonally adjusted, 2002 constant dollars)* in the third quarter of 2012.** Commercial non-residential construction continued to surge (+6.0%) and activity in the industrial building sector (+5.8%) was also on the rise. Meanwhile, institutional construction fell (-5.8%).

  Investment was robust in Vancouver (+6.9%), but non-residential construction investment activity continued to fall in Victoria (-3.4%), Kelowna (-6.0%), and Abbotsford-Mission (-9.9%).

  Nationally, expenditures were up 0.6% over the second quarter. Heightened construction activity in PEI (+17.1%), Saskatchewan (+3.9%), Quebec (+2.8%) and BC (+2.5%) were among those driving the increase.

Data Source: Statistics Canada

Health

- **In 2009/2010, over three-quarters (77%) of Canadian opposite-sex couples, where the female partner was aged 18 to 44, had tried to conceive at some point in their relationship.** Approximately 15% of these couples reported seeking medical help to assist in becoming pregnant. Couples in which the woman was aged 35 to 44 were more likely to have sought such assistance than were younger couples, and childless couples were more likely to have sought help than those with at least one child.

Data Source: Statistics Canada

- **In 2008/09, more than three-quarters of Canadian seniors (aged 65 and older) perceived their health to be good, very good or excellent.** Approximately one in five seniors expressed being lonely or dissatisfied with life. Most seniors (80%) were frequent participants in at least one social activity and a higher number of activities were associated with positive self-perceived health and a decrease in their likelihood of reporting loneliness or life dissatisfaction.

  Activities with family or friends were the most common activity in which seniors participate. The most frequently mentioned obstacles to participating in more activities were health limitations, being too busy, personal or family responsibilities, not wanting to go alone and transportation problems.

Data Source: Statistics Canada

The Nation

- **Canadians divested $1.1 billion in foreign securities in August, following two straight months of investment.** The reduction in holdings pushed total investments over the first eight months of 2012 down to $12.1 billion. Most of the offloading of holdings was in bonds (-$1.2 billion), but Canadian investors also sold $0.5 billion in foreign equities. At the same time, foreign investors purchased $6.9 billion in Canadian securities, up from $6.7 billion in July. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

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For data originating from Statistics Canada, data sourced to 'Statistics Canada' has been retrieved from CANSIM, the agency's electronic database; otherwise the source is identified as 'SC' plus the catalogue number.

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BC at a glance . . .

POPULATION (thousands)	Jul 1/2012	% change on one year ago
BC	4,622.6	1.0
Canada	34,880.5	1.1
GDP and INCOME (Released Nov 8)		
(BC - at market prices)	2010	% change on one year ago
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) *($ millions)*	203,147	5.9
GDP *($ 2002 millions)*	167,140	3.0
GDP *($ 2002 per Capita) (reflects revised pop)*	36,899	1.4
Personal Disposable Income *($ 2002 per Capita)*	26,166	2.2
TRADE ($ millions, seasonally adjusted)		% change on prev. month
Manufacturing Shipments - Aug 2012	3,243	1.3
Merchandise Exports - Aug 2012	2,441	-5.5
Retail Sales - Jul 2012	5,128	0.7
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX	% change on	12-month avg
(all items - Sep 2012)	one year ago	% change
BC	0.7	1.5
Vancouver	0.8	1.7
Victoria	0.5	1.4
Canada	1.2	2.0
LABOUR FORCE (thousands)		
(seasonally adjusted)	Sep 2012	% change on prev. month
Jobs Created (-Lost) - BC	5.7	
Labour Force - BC	2,503.4	0.6
Employed - BC	2,328.3	0.2
Unemployed - BC	175.1	5.7
		Aug 2012
Unemployment Rate - BC *(percent)*	7.0	6.7
Unemployment Rate - Canada *(percent)*	7.4	7.3
INTEREST RATES (percent)	Oct 17/2012	Oct 19/2011
Prime Business Rate	3.00	3.00
Conventional Mortgages - 1 year	3.10	3.50
- 5 year	5.24	5.29
US-CANADA EXCHANGE RATE	Oct 17/2012	Oct 19/2011
(avg. noon spot rate) Cdn $ per US $	0.9796	1.0136
(closing rate) US $ per Cdn $	1.0225	0.9802
AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGE RATE		
(industrial aggregate - dollars)	Sep 2012	% change on one year ago
BC	858.69	1.8
Canada	876.66	3.7

SOURCES:

Population, Gross Domestic Product, Trade, Prices, Labour Force, Wage Rate } Statistics Canada

Interest Rates, Exchange Rates: Bank of Canada Weekly Financial Statistics

For latest Weekly Financial Statistics see www.bankofcanada.ca

Open Data, Census Area Profiles NEW – 2001 files added

Here's where you can get at the datasets for all areas, large and small. We'll be adding more as 2011 Census data are released, as well as additional historical tables – so keep coming back! See more:
http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/StatisticsBySubject/Census/OpenData.aspx

Key Indicators

A new way to stay current!. We've added a page to put the latest highlights and summary figures at your fingertips.-See more:
http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/StatisticsBySubject/KeyIndicators.aspx

Solid Waste Generation Forecast

This report highlights three projection scenarios with varying degrees of measures taken to divert waste from British Columbia landfills. The report includes a summary of the methodology and the results of the forecast for each scenario from 2010 through 2025. Read this at:
http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/StatisticsBySubject/EnvironmentalStatistics/Analysis.aspx

Census 2011 Fast Facts

The age-sex data from the 2011 Census have been released. For the first time, since reporting began, persons 65 years of age and older outnumbered 0 to 14 year-olds in BC. See more:
http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/StatisticsBySubject/Census/2011Census.aspx

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https://twitter.com/#!/bcstats

Released this week by BC Stats

- Consumer Price Index, September 2011

Released next week

- No periodical releases

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